

Albany. The previous two specimens came from Karridale and Chorkerup, both in 1933. There is no doubt that a great decline in numbers of the Quokka occurred in the 1930s. However, the authors agree with White (1952) that isolated populations of the Quokka still occur on the mainland. This view has been supported by Sharman (1954); by the capture of an immature *Setonix* by Mr. J. Rate at Walpole in December, 1955; by a visual record of Mr. R. Aitkin who saw two dead Quokkas on the Albany Highway near the Travellers Arms on January 11, 1956, and on March 22, 1956.

This evidence indicates that close attention by naturalists to suitable undisturbed swamps in the forest areas would be likely to yield more information on the mainland occurrence. The authors and the Fisheries Department would be glad to learn of the success encountered by naturalists looking in suitable localities. However, it cannot be emphasised too strongly that undirected blundering through swamps in search of Quokkas will do more to hasten their extinction than any other factor.

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LITERATURE CITED

- SHARMAN, G. B. 1954—The relationships of the Quokka (*Setonix brachyurus*). *W.A. Nat.*, 4: 159-168.
WHITE, S. R. 1952—The occurrence of the Quokka in the South-West. *W.A. Nat.*, 3: 101-103.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Grey-tailed Tattler on the Swan River Estuary.—The Grey-tailed Tattler (*Tringa brevipes*) is a relatively common visitor to northern Australia. In the south of this State two of the three known records are from the Swan River Estuary (*Emu*, 31: 278; 47: 266). Last summer four birds were seen on the shores of Melville Water, near Como beach. One was noted on November 26, 1956, and three were seen on December 3.

C. F. H. JENKINS, Department of Agriculture, Perth.

Glossy Ibis at Bibra Lake.—The Glossy Ibis (*Plagadis falcinellus*) occurs rarely in southern Australia and there are only about half a dozen published records for the South-West. It was with considerable interest, therefore, that I noted a single individual at Bibra Lake on November 26, 1956. The ibis was feeding on a grassy flat in company with 20-30 White-faced Herons. Through field glasses the sickle-shaped bill and greenish sheen on the plumage could be clearly seen. In flight the bird appears uniformly black and so cannot be confused with the Straw-necked Ibis, which shows prominent white markings when in the air.

—C. F. H. JENKINS, Department of Agriculture, Perth.

Kestrel at Sea in Northern Australia.—During May, 1957, I made a cruise in north-western and northern waters on H.M.A.S. *Fremantle*, as part of my national service training. On May 14, at

5.30 a.m. (Darwin time) when the ship was off Pt. Blaze, Northern Territory, and 58 miles offshore, a Nankeen Kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*) landed in an exhausted condition. It fluttered about the ship and after being caught was placed in a box with water. Next morning after being fed it was released. After eircling the ship it alighted on the mast. It was not seen on May 16 or 17 but reappeared again on the 18th, when it was seen sitting on the mast. It continually showed up throughout the trip of 15 days which took us to the southern end of the 80 Mile Beach and Onslow and back to Darwin. The Kestrel is known to migrate between Australia and Indonesia.

—ROBERT BOYD, Daglish.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo parasitising Western Silvereye.—On November 11, 1952, at Coolbellup Lake, 6 miles east of Fremantle, I found a nest of the Western Silvereye (*Zosterops gouldi*) containing an egg of the Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis pyrrhophanus*), with two of the host's eggs. The cuckoo's egg measured 21.3 x 15.2 mm. and was dull white, marked with minute brownish spots, with a few underlying markings of light grey, which tended to form a zone around the broader end. The nest was in a small bush (*Regelia ciliata*), about 5 ft. from the ground.

This cuckoo is a very searee species in this neighbourhood and this is the only occasion on which I have found its egg locally. It is also the only occasion on which I have found the Silvereye parasitised by any cuckoo.

The Fan-tailed Cuckoo almost invariably chooses as hosts birds which build domed nests, but there are rare records in the Eastern States of its eggs being found in eup-shaped nests (including honeyeaters, robins and sittellas). The example I report appears to be the first in which the Western Silvereye has been parasitised.

—JULIAN R. FORD, Fremantle.

Dispersal Opportunities for Exotic Snails.—Two instances recently came under notice at the Fremantle waterfront on the means by which the European snails, *Theba pisana* and *Helix aspersa*, might extend their range in Western Australia. Early in October, 1956, M.V. *Taranaki* discharged steel and general cargo from United Kingdom ports. Adhering to a girder was found an adult, 4-whorled specimen of *Helix aspersa* which, when moistened, quickly became active. Such snails can easily become secreted in cargo and generally distributed.

About three years ago the State ship *Dulverton* lifted deck cargo of jetty piles for a North-West port. The butts of most piles were deeply split, providing refuge for a large number of aestivating *Theba pisana*. The piles had lain for some time in the old Public Works Department yard, now the site of No. 10 berth of the North Wharf, which was heavily overrun with snails. Without doubt reports of the species' appearance near our North-West ports may soon be expected.

—G. KENDRICK, Fremantle.